



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
Notary Public Office  
425 Queen Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**APPLICATION FOR NOTARY PUBLIC COMMISSION**

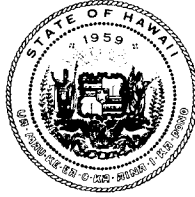
Attached are the information and instructions sheet and application form for a notary public commission. Letters of justification and character must accompany the application form. The letter of justification should state in detail the reasons for applying for a commission and should be prepared by an officer of the corporation or a partner of the organization of which the applicant is an employee. An applicant who is self-employed may prepare a letter of justification for one's self. The letter of character should be written by a reputable resident of Hawaii, other than an employer or relative, who from past association can vouch for the integrity and moral character of the applicant.

The issuance of a commission depends upon the approval of the application by the Attorney General and the successful passing of a written examination by the applicant. You will be notified in writing of your examination date, time, and place once your application is approved. The examination may be held at our branch offices or county attorneys office in the county in which the applicant resides. An Oahu applicant will take the examination at the office of the Attorney General, 425 Queen Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813.

A Notary Public Manual, published by the Department of the Attorney General, is available for \$2.35 if you want it mailed to you or \$1.50 if you pick it up at our office. You may mail a company check, cashier's check, or money order (*no personal checks*) for \$2.35 for the manual along with your application. Please make the company check, cashier's check, or money order payable to the "State Director of Finance." You may also access a copy of the manual from the state's website @ [ehawaii.gov](http://ehawaii.gov). Choose "Government in Hawaii." Under the "Executive Branch Agencies," choose the "Department of the Attorney General" and link to the "Notary Public Unit."

Please read the information and instructions sheet carefully as it contains information on the functions and responsibilities of a notary public. If there are any questions regarding the application process, feel free to call our office at (808) 586-1216. Thank you.

Attachments



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**  
425 QUEEN STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
PHONE 586-1218

**INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS ON APPLYING FOR A  
NOTARY PUBLIC COMMISSION**

(Please read carefully before proceeding to complete the application.)

1. According to Section 456-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, every person appointed as a notary public shall, at the time of one's appointment, be a resident of the State of Hawaii, possess the other qualifications required of public officers, and be at least eighteen years of age. Public officers in the State. [REDACTED] relating to notaries public, are required to be citizens, nationals, or permanent resident aliens of the United States.
2. A person desiring to be commissioned as a notary public shall apply on the form attached hereto. The affidavit at the end of the application should be completed and sworn to before a notary public commissioned to act in the State of Hawaii. The application will not be considered unless completed in full and accompanied by the letter of justification and the letter of recommendation as required in items 20 and 23 or 25, as applicable.
3. If an application is approved by the Attorney General, the applicant must pass a written closed-book examination covering such statutory laws and rules that specifically apply to notaries public in Hawaii, as well as practical aspects of a notary's practice, and a notary's duties and responsibilities. An applicant should, for example, have a thorough understanding and knowledge of the following sections of the Hawaii Revised Statutes, as amended: 456-1 to 456-18, 502-41 to 502-46, 502-48 to 502-84, 603-1, 621-12, and 621-13. The Department of the Attorney General will inform the applicant of the examination date and time approximately 2 to 3 weeks after approving the application.
4. Upon being notified of passing the examination, the applicant shall pay to the Attorney General, for the issuance of the original commission, a fee of \$40. The applicant shall also arrange to have a seal of office made, on which shall be engraved the notary's name, and the words, "Notary Public" and "State of Hawaii."
5. Before entering upon the duties of office, a notary must execute, at the notary's own expense, an official surety bond meeting the requirements of Section 456-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes. The bond must be approved by a judge of the circuit court. Upon approval, the bond shall be deposited and kept on file in the office of the clerk of the circuit court of the judicial circuit for and which the notary resides.
6. Each person appointed and commissioned as a notary public must forthwith file a literal of photostatic copy of one's commission, an impression of one's seal, and a specimen of one's official signature with the clerk of the circuit court in which the notary resides. Each person may also, at one's option, file the above-named documents with the clerk of any circuit court. The clerk of each circuit court charges a fee for the filing of the copy of a commission.
7. A Notary Public Manual, published by the Department of the Attorney General, is available for a slight charge and is strongly recommended as reading material for all potential notaries.

**GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE DUTIES OF A  
NOTARY PUBLIC**

In addition to the statutes mentioned above, potential notaries should be familiar with the following information, as the notary examination may cover the same:

1. **Definition.** A notary is defined as a "public officer whose function is to attest and certify, by his hand and official seal, certain classes of documents, in order to give them credit and authenticity in foreign jurisdictions, to take acknowledgments of and certify deeds and other conveyances, and to perform certain official acts, chiefly in commercial matters." 66 C.J.S. Notaries § 1.
2. **Why documents are notarized.** A document is notarized in order to protect persons signing an important document. It assures the parties to an agreement that this particular document and no other is the authentic document which is intended to be given full force and effect. Because of the recent improvements in photocopying machines, it is important that certain documents be notarized and notarized properly—otherwise any imposter could forge a signature and substitute an authentic document with an illegally altered and fraudulent document.

3. **Duties.** “A notary must perform his official duties with integrity, diligence, and skill. His duty is not confined to the one to whom he directly renders service, but it extends to all persons who may be affected by his act.” 66 C.J.S. Notaries § 10. The powers and duties vested in the notary are personal to the notary and should never be delegated; i.e., a notary should not allow a clerk or deputy to perform a notarial act for the notary.

Under the Hawaii statutes, the duties of a notary public are generally confined to performing the following notarial acts:

(a) Taking an acknowledgment — “An acknowledgment is a public declaration or formal statement of the person executing (signing) an instrument made to the official authorized to take the acknowledgment, that the execution of such instrument was his or her free act and deed. The written evidence of an acknowledgment is the certificate of the officer who takes the acknowledgment, which states in substance that the person named in the acknowledgment was known to and appeared before the officer and acknowledged the instrument to be his or her act and deed.” 1 Am.Jur. Legal Forms 2d Acknowledgments § 7:1.

(b) Administering an oath, affirmation or affidavit — “An oath is a solemn pledge or promise made by a person (often called the affiant) with an appeal to God, or a Supreme Being, to attest to the truth of his words.” Rotham, Customs and Practices of Notaries Public and Digest of Notary Laws in the United States (Rev. 1974) at p. 14. An affirmation is “a solemn statement or declaration made as a substitute for a sworn statement by a person whose conscience will not permit him to be sworn.” 13 Am.Jur. Legal Forms 2d Oath and Affirmation § 189:1. An affidavit is a written or printed statement of facts, made voluntarily, and under oath or affirmation of the party making it, taken before an officer having authority to administer such oath. Black’s Law Dictionary (Rev. 4th Ed.), at p. 80.

(c) Taking a deposition — “The term ‘deposition’ is sometimes used in a broad sense to describe any written statement verified by oath; but in its more technical and appropriate sense, the meaning of the word is limited to the written testimony of a witness given in the course of a judicial proceeding, either at law or in equity, in advance of the trial or hearing upon oral examination or in response to written interrogatories and where an opportunity is given for cross-examination.” 23 Am.Jur. 2d Depositions and Discovery § 108.

(d) Noting a protest — A protest is a “formal declaration made by a person interested or concerned in some act about to be done, or already performed, whereby he expresses his dissent or disapproval, or affirms the act against his will. The object of such a declaration is to preserve some right which would be lost if his implied assent could be made out or to exonerate himself from some responsibility which would attach to him unless he expressly negated his assent.” Black’s Law Dictionary (Rev 4th Ed.), p. 1387.

In noting a protest, a notary writes down how and when one performs certain acts the notary was called upon to perform. For example, in noting a protest of negotiable paper, a notary may declare in writing under the notary’s seal of office, that at the request of the holder of a bill or note, the notary presented said bill or note to A for payment, but said payment was refused for certain reasons, whereupon the notary notified certain parties of the refusal.

#### **4.Limitations and obligations of a notary.**

(a) As a general rule, a notary public cannot certify to, or act in, a matter in which the notary has a personal interest. 66 C.J.S. Notaries § 6. A notary should never, under any circumstances, notarize one’s own signature.

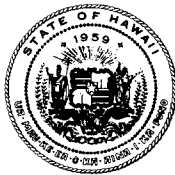
(b) “The most important obligation a Notary has to the public he serves is to judge what acts constitute the practice of law and what acts constitute the practice of a Notary Public. If the Notary, who is not an attorney, is asked to perform a notarial act that requires the preparation of, or the giving of advice in regard to the preparation of, a legal document or form, the Notary should always obtain the advice of an attorney unless he has had special education and training.” Rothman, *supra*, at p. 28.

(c) As a general rule, “the notarization of a document that has been written in a foreign language should only be performed by a Notary who has a thorough understanding of the foreign language in which the document and/or notarial certificate are written.” Rotham, *supra*, at p. 29.

(d) “The Notary should avoid being placed in the position of having to decide whether a person is sufficiently competent to fully understand the agreement he is signing or the oath or affidavit he is taking. The notary should either seek counsel from his own attorney or advise the party who appears to be incompetent to go to an attorney himself. If a person is declared to have been incompetent at the time the agreement was signed and notarized, the agreement could be declared null and void. If the party is blind, senile, a minor, or does not seem to understand the importance of the document he is signing, the Notary will do himself, as well as the party, a service if he asks him to go to an attorney.” Rotham, *supra*, at p. 30.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ DENIED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
NOTIFIED \_\_\_\_\_ EXAMINATION BY \_\_\_\_\_ SCORE \_\_\_\_\_  
EFFECTIVE DATE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF EXPIRATION \_\_\_\_\_ COMM. NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
RCV DT of BOND \_\_\_\_\_ RECORD BOOKS \_\_\_\_\_ SPECIMEN CARD \_\_\_\_\_  
RCFT NO. \_\_\_\_\_ COMM. P/U DT \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER \_\_\_\_\_



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APPLICATION FOR NOTARY PUBLIC COMMISSION FOR THE STATE OF HAWAII

Please read the information and instructions on applying for a notary public commission before completing application.  
**PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY IN INK.**

A. PERSONAL DATA

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle
2. Residence Address \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
(No., Street, City, State, Zip)
3. Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Employer \_\_\_\_\_
4. Employer's Business \_\_\_\_\_ (Describe Fully) Bus. Phone \_\_\_\_\_
5. Applicant's Business Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(No., Street, City, State, Zip)
6. Are you a resident of Hawaii? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Are you a U.S. citizen? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Are you blind? \_\_\_\_\_ Have you sufficient vision to read typewritten matter? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Are you deaf? \_\_\_\_\_ Are you able to speak? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Can you read, write and speak the English language with understanding? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Can you read, write and speak a second language with understanding? \_\_\_\_\_  
What is your second language? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Have you ever been adjudged insane or been a patient in a mental institution? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_  
Where? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Have you ever been convicted of a felony--an offense punishable with imprisonment for a term which is in excess of one year? \_\_\_\_\_ Or of a moral charge? \_\_\_\_\_ What offense? \_\_\_\_\_  
When? \_\_\_\_\_ Where? \_\_\_\_\_
14. Were you sentenced and imprisoned? \_\_\_\_\_ For how long? \_\_\_\_\_  
Have you been pardoned? \_\_\_\_\_ By Whom? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_
15. Have you ever been expelled from the Legislature of the State of Hawaii for giving or receiving a bribe or for being an accessory to the giving or receiving of a bribe? \_\_\_\_\_

16. Have you ever been convicted of perjury? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_ Where? \_\_\_\_\_  
Have you ever been convicted of subornation? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_ Where? \_\_\_\_\_
17. Have you ever been previously commissioned as a Notary Public in the State of Hawaii? \_\_\_\_\_  
Commission no.? \_\_\_\_\_ For what circuit? \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration date of commission? \_\_\_\_\_  
Did you resign? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_  
Were you removed from office? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_
18. Have you ever been a defendant in a civil suit involving forgery, fraud, misrepresentation, or breach of fiduciary duty? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_ Where? \_\_\_\_\_
19. Are you licensed to practice law? \_\_\_\_\_ Where? \_\_\_\_\_  
Have you ever been disbarred? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_ Where? \_\_\_\_\_
20. Please submit a letter from a person residing in this State, not a relative or an employer, who can vouch for your integrity and moral character.

**B. PUBLIC GOOD AND CONVENIENCE**

21. Is anyone else in your business establishment at the business address indicated in Item A.5 above a notary public? \_\_\_\_\_ Who? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many notarial transactions did each of them perform during the past year? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many notarial transactions do you estimate you would perform each month if granted a notary commission? \_\_\_\_\_
22. Does any notary public have an office or place of business in the same building where you are employed? \_\_\_\_\_  
Who? \_\_\_\_\_
23. Please submit a letter from your employer, or if self-employed, from yourself, setting forth in detail the reasons why your commission is being sought, the types of documents you would be required to notarize in your line of work, and the approximate number of transactions you would perform each month. This letter should contain a statement by the employer, or the applicant if self-employed, acknowledging that the employer recognizes that a notary is a public officer and that the applicant would be permitted to serve the general public in such capacity during normal business hours.

**C. FOR APPLICATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT NOTARIES ONLY**

24. If commissioned, do you intend to only act as a notary public for government matters? \_\_\_\_\_
25. Please submit a letter from the head of the board, commission, or department by which you are employed, designating you to perform, without charge, the services of a notary in all business pertaining to such board, commission, or department.

**D. AFFIDAVIT**

STATE OF HAWAII )  
 ) SS.  
\_\_\_\_ COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_ )

I, \_\_\_\_\_, being first duly sworn, declare that I am the  
(Name of Applicant)  
applicant named in the foregoing application; that I have read the same and know the contents thereof; and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the answers and statements contained in the application are true and correct and are made in good faith.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Applicant)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this  
\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public, State of Hawaii

\_\_\_\_\_  
Typed or printed name of Notary Public

My commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_